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ABSTRACT

Noting that a family with young children is under tremendous pressure and that a babysitting cooperative can give parents relief during a vital stage of a family's development, this book provides guidance for mothers of preschool children in starting and maintaining a Smart Mom's Babysitting Cooperative based on the University Place Baby-Sitting Co-Op near Seattle, Washington. The book is presented in five sections. Section 1, "What Is a Co-Op and Why Do I Need One?" presents basic information on the program, with a question-answer format; describes centralized and decentralized cooperatives; uses parents' stories to present a rationale for developing a cooperative; and discusses safety issues. Section 2, "How Do I Start a Baby-Sitting Co-Op from Scratch?" describes how to organize a small centralized babysitting cooperative and includes startup tips for large groups. Section 3 "How Do I Get the Most from My Co-Op?" discusses evening sits, procedures for calling the sitter, sitters' responsibilities, effective ground rules, and children with special needs. Section 4, "What Do I Do as Secretary?" focuses on the secretary's responsibilities, details how to use the secretary workbook, and discusses how to coordinate sits. Section 5, "What Do I Do as Leader?" describes the leader's responsibilities, presents tips for locating mothers interested in participating, and describes the September meeting for renewing participants' registration. The book's three appendices present a flowchart for planning purposes, sample forms, and the terms of participating in Smart Mom's Inc. program of assistance. (KB)

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